

Message Text

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SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES INTERVIEW WITH PRIME MINISTER
ECEVIT

FOLLOWING ARE EXTRACTS FROM FRONT PAGE, NEW YORK TIMES
ARTICLE MAY 30, ENTITLED "TURKISH CHIEF SEES NO RUSSIAN
THREAT" REFLECTING EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW BY BERNARD GWERTZMAN.

BEGIN QUOTE.

WASHINGTON, MAY 29 - PRIME MINISTER BULENT ECEVIT OF TURKEY SAID TODAY THAT HE FELT NO THREAT TO HIS COUNTRY FROM THE SOVIET UNION AND IN FACT WOULD GO TO MOSCOW NEXT MONTH AND PROBABLY SIGN "A POLITICAL DOCUMENT" AFFIRMING EACH NATION'S GOOD WILL TOWARD THE OTHER.

IN AN INTERVIEW ON THE EVE OF THE START OF A SUMMIT MEETING OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION, MR. ECEVIT STRESSED HIS UNHAPPINESS WITH THE FAILURE SO FAR OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION TO WIN CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL FOR THE LIFTING OF THE UNITED STATES' THREE-YEAR-OLD ARMS EMBARGO AGAINST TURKEY.

HE SAID THAT EVEN IF THE EMBARGO WAS FINALLY ENDED, TURKEY WOULD UNDERTAKE A NEW DEFENSE POLICY THAT WOULD INEVITABLY

REDUCE ITS MILITARY CONTRIBUTION TO NATO.

CALLS POLICY OUTDATED - HIS COMMENTS WERE AT WIDE VARIANCE WITH THE GENERAL EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN VOICED BY MANY WESTERN LEADERS ABOUT WHAT THEY SEE AS THE EXPANSIONISM OF THE SOVIET UNION IN EUROPE AND AFRICA, AND THEY SINGLED OUT THAT DURING THE TWO-DAY MEETING MR. ECEVIT WOULD BE AT ODDS UNCLASSIFIED

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WITH HIS COLLEAGUES ON GLOBAL ISSUES.

THE DISCLOSURE THAT HE WAS DEFINITELY GOING TO MOSCOW-IT HAS BEEN A SUBJECT OF SPECULATION IN ANKARA-WILL PROBABLY BE SEEN BY SUPPORTERS OF GREECE ON CAPITOL HILL AS AN ATTEMPT TO PUT PRESSURE ON CONGRESS TO LIFT THE EMBARGO, A STEP THAT THE ADMINISTRATION ADVOCATES. BUT THE TURKISH LEADER INSISTED THAT HE WAS NOT TRYING TO "BLACKMAIL" ANYONE.

MR. ECEVIT ASSERTED THAT TURKEY'S RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION WERE IMPROVING AND THAT HIS VISIT, STARTING ON JUNE 21, WOULD MARK THE DETENTE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

TURKEY'S DEFENSE POLICY "TO A LARGE EXTENT DATES TO THE TIME OF THE COLDWAR", MR. ECEVIT SAID. "WE OUGHT TO HAVE A NEW DEFENSE CONCEPT THAT FITS THE PERIOD OF DETENTE BETTER."

INTERVIEWED IN HIS HOTEL SUITE AT THE SHERATON CARLTON HOTEL A FEW HOURS AFTER HIS ARRIVAL FOR THE OPENING TOMORROW OF THE TWO-DAY MEETING OF NATO LEADERS, MR. ECEVIT

WAS CONSIDERABLY MORE RELAXED ABOUT THE SOVIET UNION THAN HIGH AMERICAN OFFICIALS OR JOSEPH M. A. H. LUNS, THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ALLIANCE. MR. LUNS SAID AT A NEWS CONFERENCE TODAY THAT HE WAS GLOOMY ABOUT THE WORLD SITUATION BECAUSE OF SOVIET MILITARY ACTIONS AROUND THE WORLD.

MR. ECEVIT SAID THAT TURKEY WAS GOING THROUGH AN INTENSIVE DEFENSE REVIEW, IN PART BECAUSE OF THE IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH THE RUSSIANS, BUT ALSO BECAUSE TURKEY'S ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS SO GRAVE THAT THE GOVERNMENT COULD NO LONGER AFFORD TO SPEND MORE ON DEFENSE THAN MOST NATO COUNTRIES DO.

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HE INDICATED THAT IF THE ARMS EMBARGO WAS NOT ENDED, TURKEY'S CONTRIBUTION TO NATO WOULD DROP MORE THAN IF THE EMBARGO WAS LIFTED AND TURKEY WAS ALLOWED MORE LOANS AND GRANTS. THE EMBARGO WAS IMPOSED AGAINST TURKEY IN 1975 BECAUSE OF ITS INVASION OF CYPRUS IN 1974. THE TURKS HOLD

ABOUT 40 PERCENT OF THE ISLAND'S TERRITORY.

CALLS ALLIES UNWILLING - TRYING TO LEAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS SPEAKING MORE OUT OF SORROW THAN ANGER, MR. ECEVIT ALSO NOTED THAT THE WEST EUROPEAN ALLIES HAD SO FAR BEEN UNWILLING TO TAKE UP THE DEFENSE ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY THAT HAD BEEN SUPPLIED BY THE UNITED STATES.

THE TURKISH LEADER STRESSED THAT HE WANTED BETTER RELATIONS WITH GREECE, AND TONIGHT HE AND PRIME MINISTER CONSTANTINE CARAMANLIS OF GREECE MET AT BLAIR HOUSE, THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN GUEST HOUSE, TO RESUME TALKS THEY HAD BEGUN A FEW MONTHS AGO IN SWITZERLAND.

WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE APPARENT DIVERGENCE BETWEEN HIS VIEW OF THE WORLD AND THAT EXPRESSED BY MR. LUNS AND ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, PRESIDENT CARTER'S ADVISER FOR NATIONAL SECURITY, MR. ECEVIT COUNTERED BY SAYING THAT THE AMERICAN ATTITUDE TOWARD TURKEY AND THE LACK OF ANY CONCERTED EFFORT TO LIFT THE EMBARGO DID NOT INDICATE A GENUINE FEAR OF THE RUSSIANS.

"ABOUT DETENTE," HE SAID, "WELL, BOTH SIDES COMPLAIN ABOUT EACH OTHER, NOW AND THEN, BUT I BELIEVE THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION HAVE EVERY INTEREST IN CONTINUING DETENTE."

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MR. ECEVIT SAID THAT TURKEY WOULD REMAIN IN THE NATO ALLIANCE EVEN IF IT ALTERED ITS DEFENSE AND POLITICAL RELATIONSHIPS.

"ONE ALWAYS HAS TO KEEP HIS EYES ON MAINTAINING DETENTE," HE SAID. "IT NEEDS PERMANENT VIGILANCE, AND IT IS IN A WAY A CORRECT ATTITUDE TO BE CAUTIOUS AND ANXIOUS ALL THE TIME WITHOUT OVERDOING IT AND WITHOUT PROVOKING ONE ANOTHER."

'NO THREAT' FROM SOVIET - MR. ECEVIT, WHO STUDIED AT HARVARD AND SPEAKS FLUENT ENGLISH SAID THERE HAD BEEN "NO INDICATIONS IN RECENT YEARS OF SOVIET AMBITIONS ON TURKEY OR SOVIET INTENTS TO INTERFERE IN TURKEY." HE SAID TURKEY FELT "NO THREAT" FROM MOSCOW.

HE SAID IT HAD BEEN DECIDED BY TURKEY AND THE SOVIET UNION "THAT A POLITICAL DOCUMENT COULD AND SHOULD BE SIGNED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, AND IT IS PROBABLE THAT DURING MY VISIT TO MOSCOW SUCH A DOCUMENT WILL BE SIGNED."

MR. ECEVIT SAID THAT IT WAS AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO HAVE SUCH AN ACCORD BUT THAT THE TEXT HAD NOT BEEN WORKED OUT. "IT SHOULD CERTAINLY INDICATE THE MUTUAL GOOD WILL OF BOTH COUNTRIES AND SHOULD INSURE GREATER DEGREE OF MUTUAL CONFIDENCE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES," HE SAID.

HE REFRAINED FROM SAYING THAT IT WOULD BE A NONAGGRESSION PACT, AND HE SAID TURKEY, AS A MEMBER OF NATO, WOULD NOT SEEK MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THE SOVIET UNION.

BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL MR. ECEVIT HAD CAUSED A PROBLEM FOR THE ADMINISTRATION BY INFORMING MR. CARTER THAT HE COULD NOT SIGN A PROPOSED "DECLARATION" BY NATO BECAUSE IT WAS REGARDED BY HIM AS TOO ANTI-SOVIET.

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ASKED TO EXPLAIN, HE SAID:

"AS LONG AS TURKEY'S POSITION IN NATO AND VIS-A-VIS HER RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES ARE SORT OF SUSPENDED, UNCERTAIN, IT IS NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE FOR US TO ENGAGE OURSELVES IN CERTAIN POLICIES AND ATTITUDES. DEFENSE MATTERS, PARTICULARLY IN TURKEY'S GEOPOLITICAL POSITION, ARE INEVIT-

ABLY LINKED WITH INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN GENERAL. SO
THE CONTINUATION OF THE EMBARGO AND OUR PROBLEMS WITHIN THE
ALLIANCE SOMETIMES MAY MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO FOLLOW
THE SAME LINE OF POLICIES OR ATTITUDES THAT OUR ALLIES MAY
SEE FIT TO IN CERTAIN CASES, ALTHOUGH IN GENERAL OUR POLICY
LINES MAY AND SHOULD CONVERGE." END TEXT. VANCE

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